

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/522,619

Examiner

Naresh Vig

Applicant(s)

POST ET AL.

Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 27 June 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 3-9.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____



Naresh Vig
Examiner
Art Unit: 3629

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

The drawings have been approved by the examiner

Allowable Subject Matter

The present invention is directed to a method for protecting postal security module suitable for use in a postage meter machine or mail-processing machine or a computer with mail-processing capability. Applicants invention monitors status, the proper use or the replacement of the security module with at least two function units in the security module, signaling at least one status controlled by a first of the function units, and erasing sensitive (security relevant) data if an improper use or replacement is detected at least with a second of the function units. The security module is re-initialized with the first function unit by restoring previously erased, sensitive data following proper use or replacement of the security module, and the security module is placed back into operation by enabling the function units of the security module.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Prior art Windel teaches method for securing data and program code of an electronic postage meter machine against manipulation, having a microprocessor in a

Art Unit: 3629

control unit of the postage meter machine; steps for a start and initialization routine and following system routine with a possibility of entering into a communication mode with a remote data central. to activate the device after the security check is performed.

Windel does not teach storing data in non-volatile memory; monitoring proper insertion security module; detecting status indicating improper replacement of said security module with said second function unit; upon a detection of said improper use and said improper replacement, said second function unit causing said security-relevant data to be erased; and, when said second function unit detects that said status no longer exists, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

Prior art Hughes Network Systems (HNS) teaches devices which used non-volatile memory to store information, external server for storing software code and configuration information to load and restore configuration (re-initialize) modules.

HNS does not teach detecting status indicating improper replacement of said security module with said second function unit; upon a detection of said improper use and said improper replacement, said second function unit causing said security-relevant data to be erased; and, when said second function unit detects that said status no longer exists, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

Prior art Pauschinger teaches determine whether the security arrangement that is allocated to the particular user program or to the respective mail carrier is present. Pauschinger teaches security module in a security arrangement equipped with high security against manipulation; programmed with a non-readable program part that implements a manipulation-proof credit reloading into the mail registers; at least one security module checks the authorization of the individual components and monitors the data transfer between personal computer and machine base station.

Pauschinger does not teach when detection is made that there is no status of improper replacement of security module, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

Prior art Emmett discloses that Postal Security Devices (PSD) may be implemented as a cartridge that can be inserted into and removed from the host system. Emmett teaches battery-powered detection and erasing circuits to detect any tampering, at the time the tampering occurs and to immediately erase all memory contents that are cryptographically important.

Emmett does not teach when detection is made that there is no status of improper replacement of security module, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

Prior art Angelo teaches enabling power to all or portions of a computer system based upon the results of a two-piece user verification process. Angelo teaches at some point during the secure power-up procedure, the computer user provides an external token or smart card that is coupled to the computer through specialized hardware. The token or smart card is used to store an encryption algorithm furnished with an encryption key; The two-piece nature of the authorization process requires the presence of both the pieces of user verification for the device to function.

Angelo does not teach when detection is made that there is no status of improper replacement of security module, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

Prior art Quatse teaches postage meter that provides high degrees of security and fault tolerance. The meter maintains data security under low power conditions by the use of functionally nonvolatile memory units. Upon detecting an error condition, the microcomputer writes an appropriate fault code to the battery augmented memories (BAM). A mechanism for disabling the meter includes dual redundant flip-flops which are set to a "faulted" state upon detection by the microcomputer of a failure condition. They cannot be reset except by physical access to the meter interior, which access is only available to authorized personnel at the factory. If the microcomputer is powered, MPCLR prevents it from executing instructions and SYSCLR isolates it. Quatse teaches

various register values and the fault code then allow a reconstruction of the proper register values.

Quatse does not teach when detection is made that there is no status of improper replacement of security module, initiating re-initializing, with said first function unit, any erased, security relevant data; after said re-initializing, enabling each of said first function unit and said second function unit to re-commission said security module.

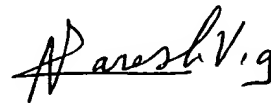
Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naresh Vig whose telephone number is (571) 272-6810. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 - 6:00 (Wednesday off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3629

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Naresh Vig". The signature is stylized with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Naresh Vig
Examiner
Art Unit 3629

April 3, 2006